CURRICULUM EVALUATION

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Curriculum is defined as the sum of all experiences, which are to be provided in an educational institution. According to Wheeler (1967) curriculum means the planned experiences offered to the learners under the guidance of the school. Curriculum has been defined by Tanner & Tanner (1975) as the planned guided learning experience and intended learning out-comes formulated through a systematic reconstruction of knowledge and experiences under the auspices of the school for the learner’s continuous and willful growth in academic, personal & social competence.

Evaluation is a word used in a variety of ways sometimes with imprecise and overlapping meanings (Lawton, 1973). It is much wider than that measurement. It is more fundamentally concerned with deciding on the value or worth wholeness of a learning process as well as the effectiveness with which it is being carried out. Curriculum evaluation refers to the process of studying the merit or worth of some aspect, or the whole of a curriculum. Depending on the way in which the term curriculum is defined, the focus or objects of curriculum evaluation could include Curriculum design, Learning environment, Instruction Process, Resources and Materials used in instructional process. It is also essential to find out about the adequacy as well as the provision of the required teaching resources such as teaching aids, laboratories, library books and instruments (Wiles & Bondi, 1989). Curriculum evaluation is clearly a process by which we attempt to gauge the value and effectiveness of any piece of educational activity which could be a rational project, or a piece of work under taken by or with pupils.

LEVELS OF EVALUATION:

The evaluation can be undertaken at two levels. According to Scrivens (1967):

1. Course Improvement: during the
2. Decisions about individuals: Identifying the needs of the pupil for the sale of planning of instruction and grouping, acquainting the pupil with his own deficiencies.
3. Administrative regulations: Judging how good the school system is, how good individual teachers are.

The goal of evaluation must be to answer questions of selection, adoption, support and worth of educational materials and activities. It helps in identifying the necessary improvements to be made in content, teaching methods, learning experiences, educational facilities, staff-selection and development of educational objectives. It also serves the need of the policy makers, administrators and other members of the society for the information about the educational system.

PURPOSE OF CURRICULUM EVALUATION:

Educational prepares future generation to take their due place in the society. It becomes essential that standard educational goals, materials and methods of instruction are not retained but up-dated in consonance with the advances in social cultural & scientific field. It is also important to ascertain how different educational institutions and situations interpret a given or prescribed curriculum. Hence, arises the need for curriculum evaluation.

Curriculum evaluation monitors and reports on the quality of education. Cronbach (1963) distinguishes three types of decisions for which evaluation is used.

1. Course Improvement: deciding what instructional material and methods are satisfactory and where changes are needed.
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of learners. The data gathered is in the form of test scores of students, which are employed to compare student’s achievements. The decision about the programme is made on the basis of this comparison. In the humanistic approach, the evaluator uses data obtained from thick descriptions of actual events. Data is also obtained from interviews with the participants in the curriculum programme and is utilized for the purposes of evaluation.

**EVALUATION MODELS:**

Evaluation models are categorized (i) Curriculum Product Evaluation and (ii) Curriculum Programme Evaluation.

(i) **Curriculum Product Evaluation:**

If focuses on products such as course of study, syllabi, text-book etc. This type of curriculum product evaluation employees specified external criteria. In this sense, curriculum evaluation is an examination of the adequacy of the curriculum product based on derived characteristics describing appropriateness. There are two models under this category.

(a) **“The Eight Year Study”** Evaluation Model:

This model offers an example curriculum product evaluation characteristics, such as adequacy of teacher’s manual for class-room application and for providing explanation as to the content-selecting sequence, presentation, effectiveness of curriculum material and specification of instructional objectives.

The steps in evaluation as recommended by Taylor (1949) were as follow:

1. Establishment of broader goals of the programme.
2. Classification and definition of objectives is behavioural terms.
3. Identification of situations where the achievement of the objectives is indicated.
4. Development of measurement techniques.
5. Collection of student performance data.
6. Comparison of data with behaviorally stated objectives.

(b) **Provus’ Discrepancy Evaluation Model:**

1. Determining programme standards
2. Determining programme performance
3. Comparing the performance with standards.
4. Determining whether a discrepancy exists between performance and standards.

In this model the programme, in operation, is constantly judged in terms of fixed standard criteria already established.

(ii) **Curriculum Programme Evaluation:**

The term curriculum programme evaluation refers to a complex set of interactions between a given instructional programme and its setting (Omstein & Hunkins, 1988). This is concerned with looking at how a particular curriculum works within its instructional setting. It also points out towards the methods to be used for data collection by means of class-room observations, interviews and documentary analysis. Under this category, there are two models which are as follow:

(a) **Stake’s Congruence – contingency Model**

This model emphasized on a full description of the educational programme and the curriculum process. Three sources of information are taken into account (i) Antecedents (ii) Transactions and (iii) Out-comes. Antecedents refer to conditions existing prior to teaching and learning. Transactions are the encounters in the learning situation and Out-comes take into consideration the intended as well as the unintended, which arise during the implantation of a programme.

This model recognizes that multiple standards operated depending on the educational setting, instructor and student. The recognitions of logical contingency between the antecedents, transactions and outcomes is an important feature of this model. The evaluator is making judgements regarding the programme based on the congruency between the intended and the observed aspects of the curriculum.

(b) **Stufflebeam’s CIPP Model:**

The full-form of CIPP is Context, Input, Process and Product.

**CONTEXT**: Evaluation involves studying the reality in which the programme is run.

**INPUT**: Evaluation provides information for determining how alternative curricular strategies would be able to contribute to the attainment of curricular intentions. This component of evaluation examines things such as (i) appropriateness of selected objectives (ii) congruency between objectives and content (iii) appropriateness of the instructional strategies and assessment procedures.

**PROCESS**: Evaluation examines the implementation aspect of the curricular programme. In **PRODUCT**: Evaluation using data about the three factors viz., context, input and process, the extent to which the objectives are being achieved and determined.

**TECHNIQUES OF EVALUATION:**

A variety of techniques are employed. Questionnaire, checklist, interview, group discussions evaluation workshops and Delphi techniques are the major one.

(a) **Observation**: It is related to curriculum transaction. Observation schedule helps the evaluator to focus his attention on the aspects of the process that are most relevant to his investigation. This method gains credibility when it contains both subjective and objective methods.

(b) **Questionnaire**: It is used to obtain reaction of curriculum users namely pupils, teachers, administrators, parents and other educational workers concerning various aspects of prescribed curriculum are to be ascertained.
c) Check-list: It can be used as a part of questionnaire and interview. It provides numbers of responses out of which most appropriate responses are to be checked by the respondent.

d) Interview: It is a basic technique of evaluation and for gathering information. It may be formal or informal in nature. The information required should be suitably defined and the presentation of questions should in no case betray and sort of bias the part of the interviewer.

e) Workshops & Group discussion: In this technique, experts are invited at one place to deliberate upon syllabi, materials etc; and to arrive at a consensus regarding the quality of the same. The materials may be evaluated against a set of criteria that might have been prepared by the evaluator.

f) Delphi Technique: A “Remote Conferencing” is employed instead of work-shop technique. It can be used at various stages of curriculum development. This technique is cost effective and provides an equal opportunity to all members of the group to express their individual views.

◆ CONCLUSIONS:
Curriculum is the sum of total of all experiences to be provided to the learners and transected by teachers. It can also defined as the planned & guided learning experiences formulated through a systematic reconstruction of knowledge. The developed curriculum should be filtered through evaluation techniques. For this different models are to be employees and ultimately finalized. A good curriculum is the important one for the development of a child, system and finally for national development.

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